



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

OCTOBER 1 – 5, 2018

SPECIAL STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE LIBERIAN GOVERNMENT AT THE SIXTY-NINE SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Delivered by Honorable Varney A. Sirleaf

Minister

**Ministry of Internal Affairs & Chairman of the Board of Directors,
Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission, LRRRC**

Your Excellency:

We bring you greetings from His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Liberia, George Manneh Weah, and congratulate you for the warm hospitality in handling this very important meeting.

The government and people of Liberia are honored to be invited to the 69th Session of the Executive Committee Meeting (EXCOM) which is essential to finding durable solutions for all refugees in Liberia and the sub-region.

Your Excellency and distinguished members of EXCOM 2018, the Government under the leadership of President George Manneh Weah is aimed at continuing the efforts of past governments by fostering the peace process toward national reconciliation. The new Government in Liberia had developed a Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development of which the refugee program is aligned fully with.

We are again pleased to share with this extraordinary body our achievements in providing durable solutions to the refugees, asylum seekers and other persons of concern (POC) living in Liberia. Examples of our commitments are the following:

- a. The Government of Liberia continues to allow persons fleeing persecution to seek asylum in Liberia. In 2018, of the 33 asylum applications in the country, 5 have been granted refugee status.
- b. Refugee services which traditionally are handled by the UNHCR, have now been integrated in the national framework, where both Liberians and refugees have access to and getting the same services. These services include Health, Education and Social Protection.
- c. Amidst global challenges in providing sustainable durable solutions for the refugee cause, the Government of Liberia has shown 100% goodwill to support Durable Solutions, including Local Integration, for all refugees living in Liberia. This has resulted in the following positive steps;
 - o The provision of 310 acres of land in one of the refugee hosting areas to support the local integration program for refugees opting to live in Liberia.
 - o The Government of Liberia by and through the active participation of the President on July 26, 2018, National Independence Day of Liberia, issued Certificates of Naturalization to 375 former Sierra Leonean Refugees; and is in the process of completing the civil documentation for the residual caseload of 1,101 former Sierra Leonean Refugees living in Liberia.

- Steps have been taken to develop a comprehensive national Local Integration Strategy to promote assimilation and peaceful co-existence for all refugees who will opt to integrate in Liberia.
- d. The new Government of Liberia remains committed to improving existing domestic legal norms one of which is the ongoing revision of the 1973 Alien and Nationality Laws (ANL) which restricts Liberian women passing their nationality to their children. Once amended and passed by Parliament, this will be a positive step towards preventing statelessness.
- e. The Government of Liberia remains committed to and will strive to domesticate international instruments acceded to. In particular the two Conventions relating to Stateless Persons and the 2009 Kampala AU Convention on Internal displacement.

Thank you Excellency and Distinguished Members